GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4049
ANSWERED ON:09.04.2003
INSURANCE COVER TO AIDS PATIENTS
ASHOK KUMAR PATEL;YEMPARALA VENKATESWARA RAO

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether public sector Life Insurance Companies propose to extend insurance cover to AIDS patients in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to extend any financial assistance to such insurance companies;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken to provide free treatment to the AIDS patients?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a) No Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise, in view of (a) above.

(e) Government provides free medical treatment for management of opportunistic infections among HIV/AIDS patients in public sector hospitals. The National AIDS Control Organisation released funds to the State AIDS Control Societies who in turn release these funds to the respective government hospitals treating HIV/AIDS patients, towards procurement of drugs and medicines for opportunistic infections. Government also provides anti-retroviral drugs for prevention of parent to child transmission of HIV. This programme is currently being scaled up to all the districts in the high prevalence State (i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu).

The Employees State Insurance (ESI) Corporation is providing anti-retroviral therapy for AIDS patients, prescribed by trained specialists and these drugs are dispensed by the respective ESI dispensaries.

However, antiretroviral therapy for AIDS patients are not supported by Government in the National AIDS Control Programme because of their prohibitive costs, indefinite period of treatment (usually life-long) and other supportive investigations (CD4/CD8 counts, viral load estimation, liver function tests, haemogram, etc.) required for monitoring the patient, while on medication.